

XVI.—HOW THE FEMALE DUGONG CARRIES HER YOUNG

In my paper on the Dugong (*Journ. Bom. Nat. His. Soc.*, Vol. xxxiii, No. 1, p. 96.) a reference was made to the manner in which the mother dugong carries her young. Langvel (*Der Zoologische Garten Ann.*, p. 37, 1896) states that the baby dugong supports itself on the back of its mother. According to Petit (*Bull. Mus. d'Hist. Nat.*, Paris, No. 5, 1927), this was also the opinion of the Malagassy fishermen. It was pointed out that even if the baby dugong was able to take refuge under the breast of its mother, it was not apparent how it could be embraced by the comparatively short flippers of the parent. I have been endeavouring to collect further information on this point and have since received a letter from Mr. M. C. C. Bonnington, Divisional Forest Officer, South Andamans, who writes, 'The Andamanese harpooned a female dugong on the 8th of March carrying a fully formed young. They inform me that females with young are found chiefly during the south-west monsoon.* They also tell me that the mother carries its young when travelling firmly held to her breast with her flippers, but that it plays about near the mother when the latter is feeding.' Mr. Shunker Narayan Pillay, with whom I have also corresponded, was told by the fishermen of Rameswaram that the baby dugong is held so firmly between the flippers by the mother that three strong men were unable to extricate one from her grasp. Mr. Pillay tells me that between November 1928 and 1929, five dugongs were caught at Rameswaram in the fishermen's nets. The animals, as I have stated previously, are highly esteemed as an article of diet by the Mahomedans of the neighbourhood. Mr. Pillay states that no part is wasted, even the viscera are washed and dried and are eaten, seasoned with salt, pepper and turmeric. According to Mr. Bonnington, dugongs are still found in the Andamans in herds up to 20 and Col. M. L. Ferrar, Chief Commissioner, Andamans, writing in this connection states that owing to the practical extinction of the Andamanese and the absence of any successors to these *qua* dugong hunters, there should be plenty of dugongs in those waters.

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XVII.—THE SAWN-OFF SHOT GUN—THE WATCH-MAN'S GUN.

The question of the preservation of Game and the general Fauna of India and Ceylon is becoming more acute each year. The last few years have seen a marked change in the status of most species that are of any economic value to man, either as food or because of

* Mr. S. Wesche-Dart tells me that he observed a pair of dugongs with a young one in the Andamans in the month of December.